

Campers and counselors at Camp Stella Maris pose in front of the diocesan camp's main building after the first summer session for girls in 1941.

# The Women Behind Stella Maris

By MARY ELLEN WISNIEWSKI

Diocesan women as well as men are celebrating Camp Stella Maris' golden anniversary. The first girls encampment was in 1941.

"It was quite a novel idea, then," said Miss Mary F. Hannick, first director of the girls' encampment program. "We were way ahead of our time in offering camping to Catholic girls."

Founded in 1926 on Conesus Lake, Stella Maris was manned by seminarians who directed the male campers in hiking, swimming, and other outdoor summer activities.

"It was quite traumatic for the seminarians to have girls at the camp. They got the camp ready for the girls then packed their bags and left," explained Miss Hannick, retired director of the Genesee Settlement House in Rochester.

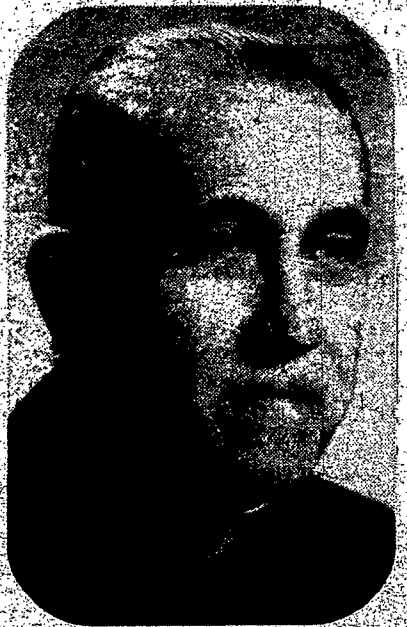
The first girl campers came to Stella Maris at the end of the summer, for a two week stay. They participated in the same activities as the boys, such as hiking to a further cabin nicknamed the "Swiss chalet," sleeping in the ball field, and telling ghost stories around the campfire.

The idea of a girls' season at Stella Maris was well received. Subtle changes occurred at the camp, such as the installation of a shower in the main building and

the inclusion of more salads in the menus.

"Monsignor Vogt used to tease that the girls cost too much at the vegetable stand," said Miss Hannick, remembering the first years at Stella Maris.

The girls' camp was staffed with women from the CYO and from the Charles and Genesee Settlement Houses, along with area college students. The Sisters of Mercy, who now run the girls' camp, supplied nurses and cooks.



Coordinator

In announcing the new regional coordinators the Courier Journal erroneously reported that Father Joseph Gaynor, new coordinator of the Chemung-Schuyler Region, is pastor of St. Patrick's, Moravia. Father Gaynor is pastor of St. Charles Borromeo, in Elmira Heights. Father Gaynor was ordained in 1945 and served as associate in Holy Cross, Holy Apostles and St. Peter and Paul's, Rochester; St. Francis of Assisi, Auburn; St. Michael's, Newark; and St. John the Evangelist, Clyde. Father Gaynor was named administrator of St. Catherine's, Addison, on March 20, 1967, and pastor on June 27, 1967. He was appointed pastor of St. Charles in October, 1969.

## Capitol Letters

The Parental Consent Bill, which would plug the loophole of New York's abortion law through which abortions are now being done on minors without parental knowledge or consent, has passed both State Senate and Assembly with strong majority votes despite tremendous opposition from proponents of nonrestrictive abortion. It is now before Gov. Hugh Carey to be signed into law. Gov. Carey has remained elusive as to his intentions on this bill but has said he would rely on the opinion of State Commissioner of Health Dr. Robert Whalen.

The abortion procedure, even when done under ideal medical circumstances, can still involve a wide range of medical risks to the mother as well as the death of her unborn child with its resultant psychological and social effects. To allow random abortion of legal minors without parental knowledge or consent is to deprive girls of the loving, concerned guidance of their parents and ignores the right and responsibility of parents to guide their daughters through difficult situations.

To assure passage, it is urgent at this time for people to write the governor, urging him to sign the Parental Consent Bill. It is particularly important for those who have personal knowledge of the problems of minors who have been aborted without benefit of parental guidance, especially those in the fields of medicine and social service, to write to Dr. Robert Whalen with a copy to Gov. Carey.

Please write re: The Parental Consent Bill S #7031 (A #9313); The Honorable H. L. Carey, State Capitol, Albany, New York 12224. Robert Whalen, M.D., N.Y. State Commissioner of Health, N.Y. State Dept. of Health, Empire State Plaza, Albany, N.Y. 12227.

Compiled by Jeanne D. Sweeney

### GOLDEN WEDDINGS

Mr. and Mrs. Irving F. Simmons celebrated the 50th anniversary of their wedding on June 9. Father Roy Hagerty celebrated a Mass at St. Ambrose Church for the couple who also were feted at a party hosted by their daughter Mrs. Thomas Loughlin of Fairport. Also present were their other children, Irving F. Simmons, John F. Simmons, Mrs. William A. Stenglein and Mrs. Jeremiah Hickey.

Mr. & Mrs. Frank Casey of Summit Grove Park will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary with a Nuptial Mass and renewal of marriage vows at Sacred Heart Cathedral, at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, June 19. Their children will give a reception afterward. In addition to family and friends who live here, some of their grandchildren and great-grandchildren from Phoenix, Arizona, will attend.

## Church Groups Protest Food Stamp Cutbacks

Washington, D.C. [RNS] — The U.S. Department of Agriculture has adopted new strict food stamp regulations which would drop at least 5 million recipients from the program.

Under the tightened eligibility standards, the program would be denied to "working poor" families of four having gross pay of \$6,700 or more a year. Any non-welfare family of four with adjusted income above the official poverty level of \$5,500 a year will be ineligible.

Leaders of major religious bodies have expressed strong criticism of the proposed changes in the food stamp program which would drastically cut the number of eligible recipients.

Among early critics were officials of the United Church of Christ's Board for Homeland Ministries and



Those who believe that theology can refute the factuality of sociological findings have been tossing anathemas in my direction lately on the subject of "Humanae Vitae" and the National Opinion Research Center study of the last ten years of American Catholicism.

The arguments are mostly irrelevant to our report because my colleagues and I repeatedly asserted that we were not making theological judgments. If I may be excused for a moment and act like a bishop, I will quote from myself: "It does not follow... that religiously the encyclical was a mistake. Defenders of the pope might argue that even if he had known that the encyclical would fail... and that it would lead to a considerable loss in the Church, it would still have been necessary for him to reaffirm both the Church's teaching and its teaching authority."

But the theological arguments are still interesting, because they demonstrate how deficient is the historical and ecclesiological knowledge of even presumably well-educated and informed American Catholics.

"Even if 99 per cent of the laity and the clergy thought that birth control was all right, the pope still would have to resist it — just like Athanasius stood against the Arians and Thomas More against Henry the VIII." Now it is doubtless the case that you do not determine religious truth either by asking what everyone is doing or what everyone thinks is all right. But any ecclesiology which identifies the convictions of the Church with the Pope and excludes as irrelevant the convictions of the massive body of the faithful is an inadequate ecclesiology. We have not solved the problem of reconciling disagreements between the teaching Church and the learning Church — and it is a very serious theological problem — but the appeal to false historical analogies is no solution. Birth control is not the same kind of doctrine as either incarnation or the freedom of the Church from temporal domination. To suggest that it is, is to play debating games instead of facing a serious issue.

2. "The Pope could not change the birth control teaching because it has always been part of the Church's teaching. What's so new about birth control today?" Now there are two things wrong with that argument: it ignores the great differences in the Church's historical response at different times to contraception (which is to be found in most human ethical systems — whatever the practice of a culture may be — and historically was based on the need of the human race to reproduce itself.) Survival of humankind was usually in jeopardy in the past because so few infants lived to maturity and so many adults died young of disease or starvation before they could begin to reproduce. Seven conceptions before 30 may have been required to produce one child who would live to adulthood. When the odds were against survival, contraception was a threat to the continuation of the species.

But with the improvement of the standard of living in the West in the early 19th Century and the medical breakthroughs in treating childhood diseases and infections in the 19th and 20th centuries, the situation was dramatically reversed. Furthermore, better nutrition has made women fertile younger, remain fertile longer, and be more fertile during their reproductive years than in the past. It also has meant that more pregnancies come to full term. Seven conceptions a hundred years ago would produce one or two adults. Now you can easily have seven adults — most of them, it seems, noisy teenagers all at the same time.

In early 19th-Century France — one of the first countries to experience dramatic change — the birth rate began to fall drastically, mostly through the practice of "coitus interruptus." The Church chose not to make an issue of it. There were no formal statements from Rome — despite repeated questions from French bishops. Priests were told not to raise the question in the confessional unless they were asked. Even the famous Cure of Ars strongly advised against troubling married people by asking them about contraception in the confessional.

I am not necessarily defending the 19th-Century decision by which the Church procrastinated in the face of a demographic revolution or the drastic response of the French to what they perceived as a serious human problem. I am merely pointing out that in practice, responses to problems of the sanctity of human life and human reproductivity have varied at different times in history.

No one has claimed that "Humanae Vitae" is infallible. (Apparently, the Pope explicitly crossed out such a claim from the text.) It certainly represents the "authentic teaching" of the official Church at the present time. But it is dishonest to say that such "authentic teaching" cannot change. The record of history is that it can and has.

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